

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LISBON 01070 261717Z

72

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06

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R 261608Z FEB 75

FM AMEMBASSY LISBON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1868

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL LOURENCO MARQUES

AMCONSUL LUANDA

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

DIA WASHDC

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

AMCONSUL OPORTO

AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: ELECTORAL DEVELOPMENTS

SUMMARY: NUMBER OF METROPOLITAN DEPUTIES IS OFFICIALLY ESTABLISHED AS 247. EMIGRANTS WILL GET ONLY ONE REPRESENTATIVE. PORTUGUESE RESIDENT IN COLONIES WILL PROBABLY HAVE ONLY ONE DEPUTY PER COLONY. NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION IS IN PROCESS OF FORMATION. SOCIALISTS HAVE ANNOUNCED LIST OF CANDIDATES. CHURCH WARNED PRIESTS NOT TO RUN AS DEPUTIES. END SUMMARY.

1. MINISTRY OF INTERNAL ADMINISTRATION ANNOUNCED OFFICIALLY THAT 247 DEPUTIES WILL BE ELECTED IN APRIL 12 ELECTIONS, REPRESENTING 6,178,215 PERSONS REGISTERED TO VOTE IN METROPOLE.

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PAGE 02 LISBON 01070 261717Z

MINISTRY OF INTERTERRITORIAL COORDINATION HAS NOT YET ANNOUNCED

EXACT ADDITIONAL NUMBER OF DEPUTIES WHO WILL REPRESENT PORTUGUESE CITIZENS RESIDENT IN PRESENT COLONIAL POSSESSIONS. HOWEVER, ACCORDING TO JUST PUBLISHED LEGISLATION GOVERNING ELECTORAL PROCESS IN OVERSEAS POSSESSIONS, COLONIES WILL HAVE ONLY "SYMBOLIC" REPRESENTATION IN CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. AS IN METROPOLE, ONE DEPUTY WILL REPRESENT 25,000 VOTERS. GIVEN LOW VOTER REGISTRATION IN COLONIES, PROBABILITY IS THAT EACH COLONY WILL HAVE ONLY ONE DEPUTY.

2. PORTUGUESE EMIGRANTS HAVE FAILED BY AND LARGE TO REGISTER TO VOTE. PRELIMINARY INDICATIONS ARE THAT LESS THAN 25,000 OF SOME 2 MILLION EMIGRANTS AROUND THE WORLD REGISTERED. GOVERNMENT HAS DETERMINED THAT ALL EMIGRANTS WILL BE LUMPED INTO ONE ELECTORAL CIRCLE. IT APPEARS THAT ONE DEPUTY WILL REPRESENT EMIGRANT COMMUNITY IN CONSTITUTENT ASSEMBLY.

3. DISTRICTS WITH GREATEST NUMBER OF DEPUTIES ARE LISBON (55), FOLLOWED BY OPORTO (36), AND SETUBAL WITH 16. OTHER DISTRICTS ARE AS FOLLOWS: BRAGA 15; AVEIRO 14; SANTAREM 13; COIMBRA 12; LEIRIA 11; VISEU 10; FARA 9; CASTELO BRANCO 7; BEJA, GUARDA, VILA REAL, FUNCHAL, AND VIANA DO CASTELO 6 EACH; EVORA 5; PORTALEGRE AND BRAGANCA 4; PONTA DELGADA 3; ANGRA DO HEROISMO 2; AND HORTA 1.

4. IMPORTANT NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION, EMPOWERED TO CONDUCT AND SCRUTINIZE WHOLE ELECTORAL PROCESS, NOW BEING FORMED. IT WILL HAVE 25 MEMBERS, 12 FROM POLITICAL PARTIES WHICH WERE INCORPORATED BEFORE FEB 21.

5. SOCIALIST PARTY BECAME SECOND PARTY TO PRESENT PUBLICLY ITS LIST OF CANDIDATES TO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY. SIX MEMBERS OF PROVISIONAL GOVERNMENT, INCLUDING JUSTICE MINISTER SALGADO ZENHA AND FOREIGN MINISTER SOARES ARE CANDIDATES. ELECTORAL LAW PROHIBITS MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT FROM SIMULTANEOUSLY BEING A DEPUTY AND MEMBER OF GOVERNMENT, WHICH MEANS THAT IN LIKELY EVENT THAT THESE SIX SOCIALIST MEMBERS OF GOVERNMENT ELECTED TO CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY, THEY WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER TO RENOUNCE CANDIDACY OR GOVERNMENTAL POSITION.

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PAGE 03 LISBON 01070 261717Z

6. PORTUGUESE EPISCOPATE ISSUED COMMUNIQUE WARNING PRIESTS THAT THEY MAY NOT BE CANDIDATES FOR DEPUTY IN UPCOMING ELECTIONS. COMMUNIQUE REMINDS PRIESTS THAT TERMS OF PASTORAL LETTER OF LAST JULY REQUIRE THEM TO ABSTAIN FROM PARTY POLITICS. DEMOCRATIC MOVEMENT (MDP/CDE) HAS TWO PRIESTS ON ITS LIST OF CANDIDATES, SOCIALISTS ONE. OTHER PARTIES ARE ALSO EXPECTED TO RUN PRIESTS AS CANDIDATES.
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